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American Art Journal.

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CONTENTS.

Our Sixth Volume,	403
Max Maretzek's Italian Opera at Brooklyn Academy,	403
French Opera—Theatre Francaise,	404
Sunday Evening Concerts,	405
Signor Lorenzo Severini,	405
Jerome Hopkins' First Concert,	405
Matters Theatric,	406
Ristori,	407
Art Matters,	408
Musical Gossip,	409

OUR SIXTH VOLUME.

With the present number our FIFTH VOLUME closes, and we shall commence the SIXTH VOLUME with plenty of work before us. The present and the future both promise to be rife with musical attraction of a very high tone of character; we shall have more operatic performances than ever before, and more concerts and oratorios than have been given in one season in this city, since 1852.

Such extraordinary activity in musical matters cannot fail to have the most favorable results upon the future of the Musical Art; it will keep it constantly before the eyes and observation of the people, and awaken a hitherto undeveloped interest; it will give employment to all the musicians; it will give an impetus to teaching and will assuredly develop not only executive, but creative native genius.

We look forward confidently to the most brilliant and important musical season that New York has ever known.

The AMERICAN ART JOURNAL has prospered well. The circulation has not yet exceeded that of the *New York Ledger*, but it has steadily and constantly increased, and among that class of readers whose opinions exert a wide influence over the Art Matters of the country. The increase of its circulation abroad is particularly flattering to us, proving, as it does, that Art progress in America is closely watched in other countries. The AMERICAN ART JOURNAL is also largely quoted abroad, so that through its columns, the musical work we are doing here, is well known in England, Paris, Germany, Italy, Russia, &c.

We shall pursue the course we have hitherto followed, making our journal as interesting to our readers as possible, and adding such features as may accord with its plan or add to its attractiveness.

We are interested in the development of a new scientific process, which, if successful, will prove of vast importance to our readers. We think that success is assured, but shall not anticipate the results. A few days will decide; if favorably, we shall announce the issue, and the magnificent Art features which we shall be able to present our subscribers weekly.

MAX MARETZKE'S ITALIAN OPERA
AT BROOKLYN ACADEMY.

SECOND NIGHT.

IL TROVATORE.

Either Verdi's "Il Trovatore" has exhausted its attraction by incessant reiterations, or else threatening weather prevented many who had made preparation for attendance on its first performance this season, from carrying out their laudable purpose toward it. Consequently, but a small audience witnessed that event, and genuine enthusiasm over excellence, had to replace the effect of multitudinous applause in reward for good deeds.

Signorina Carmen Poch, by her clever attainment of Leonora's character and music, agreeably surprised her warmest admirers, while the general public were literally amazed, with the unexpectedly brilliant display of histrionic and vocal talent which then impressed their senses with vivid reality. No one had given her credit for such mastery of a tragic role supposed to be attainable only by a Medori or Zucchi, and her remarkable approach to realization of both, excited corresponding enthusiasm from all present. She, that evening, rushed to the front rank among tragic *prime donne*, and placed herself side by side with those great lyric artists in the effect given to strong dramatic music.

Mme. Natali-Testa undoubtedly suffered from the embarrassment incident to a *debut* before a strange public and in an untried theatre. She proved, however, good dramatic instinct, clever schooling of a rather light yet true and musical mezzo-soprano, combined with remarkable personal attraction, so clearly as to move all her public to hearty expressions of approval, notwithstanding her evident lack of fire and force in Azucena's terrible *scena*, closing with enthusiastic regard for her share in—"Si! La Stanchezza," which revealed admirable taste and expression, in use of a sweet and tuneable voice.

Signor Mazzoleni is ever great in Manrico's heroic role, and then acquitted himself with distinguished honor, from musicians and wit-

nesses that keenly discriminate and fully appreciate a high order of lyric performance.

Bellini, as usual, performed his whole duty as "Il Conte di Luna," but his severe duty on the previous night had left some traces upon his vocal resources, that warned against overstraining with response to enthusiastic redemand of "Il Balen."

Signor Fossati's Fernando presented the weak point of that operatic cast. He failed to make any mark there, or to carry out Verdi's real purpose.

The chorus produced by their admirable costuming, stage deportment and musical execution, a most favorable impression, so favorable, indeed, as to create doubt if New York enjoyed its equal in all respects, and the orchestra satisfied all reasonable demands.

The appearance of Miss Hauck in the character of Amina in "La Sonnambula" excited much interest, from the fact that she is native born, and her education has been exclusively pursued in this city. Miss Hauck has every natural gift calculated to secure success on the operatic stage. She is exceedingly pretty; her figure, though petite, is well turned and very graceful, and her manner is engaging from the absence of all affectation. She has a beautiful voice, which as yet has by no means reached its maturity, but which has been very carefully trained. It is well produced, and its natural flexibility has gained additional facility by judicious and careful training, so that her execution, which has both brilliancy and rapidity, is neat and perfectly articulated, and all the lighter but important graces are clearly and gracefully interpreted. Her phrasing and delivery are worthy a more experienced artist, and though lacking in abandon, is unembarrassed and not without grace. Her personation throughout was intelligent, pleasing and interesting, and dramatically and vocally, especially, she gave undoubted promise of future eminence. Her success was flattering and well deserved, and she received the honor of frequent recalls with modest gratitude. Miss Hauck has a career before her, which intelligent and constant study will render certain and brilliant. Her teacher, Signor Albites, must have felt proud of the success of his young pupil.

Signor Baragli is the sweetest tenor di grazia that we have heard for years. His voice is beautiful, incapable of great vocal efforts, but admirably trained, and produces a good effect. He sings with rare sentiment, in admirable style, and is an easy and graceful actor. He was warmly received, and will prove a valuable addition to Mr. Maretzek's operatic strength.

FRA DIAVOLO.

Auber's perennial opera—*Fra Diavolo*—had a good presentation at the Brooklyn Academy, on Friday evening.

"Zerlina" was on that occasion confided to Miss Kellogg's interpretations, as of yore it has been usually. In commencing that *role* something appeared to go wrong, and neither in voice, execution or acting did she equal former brilliant evidences that she had well considered and mastered it. She improved as the opera progressed, and obtained a fair success, both vocal and histrionic, but did not come up in vivacity, sparkle and brilliancy, to that high mark herself had set.

The other principal female *role*, known in our English version of *Fra Diavolo*, as "Lady Allcash," was graced by Mme. Natalie-Testa's pleasing address in acting, her engaging appearance and general comity in vocal management, yet lacked a voice more sonorous and effective in concerted music, and susceptible of taking color in catchy bits which there indicate dramatic movement, vividly.

"Lord Allcash," or as Italian versions style him, "Lord Rochburg," found in Ronconi a somewhat novel and more quiet, smooth, and perchance, to many—acceptable delineation than is usually accorded to such a caricature of English nobility on its grand tour.

We are not prepared to accord Ronconi, that entire supremacy in presentation of such a character, either vocally or dramatically which some London authorities have apparently yielded to him. He, undoubtedly, gives that character better semblance of reality than most operatic essayists upon it, and brings to bear upon the effective vocal or dramatic points all his masterly skill in finesse and consummate management of the voice, in *parlando* or taking ejaculations, with delightful tact in facial or bodily movement to enforce those points, yet he falls short in set pieces and in concert with others, so far of a true artistic performance of score, that a listener is alternately charmed and disaffected with those severe tests of a dramatic singer.

To judge finally of his singing in that *role*, all remembrance of his surpassing eclat in London as "Lord Allcash," when Adelina Patti's brilliancy as "Zerlina" made Covent Garden a halo of musical glory, must be discarded, and the question put, "Does he attain, musically considered, a high mark in performance of Lord Allcash?" We think he did not on that occasion, as he lacked tone and exhibited impure intonation too decidedly for satisfaction of a critical ear, and his idea of part singing was then clearly erroneous, for he appeared to consider himself free to give his part *ad libitum*,—not in good concert. There was however so much of freshness and new creation, evidenced in his vocal and dramatic treatment of the stolid English Lord's character and music, as to win him great favor, because he caused a fresh sensation from a performance, which had been done until it had almost ceased to attract notice, unless it were caricatured.

Signor Mazzoleni, considering that he sang the previous night in a very tasking *role*, accomplished *Fra Diavolo's* character and music in most admirable style, his sole blemish in song, being a mistake of style for the grand solo in last act. That, however, never had but one accomplisher within our remembrance, and the recollection of his "Proudly and Wide my Standard flies," will never fade away from the minds of those favored with a hearing of it from Joseph Wood.

Signor Bernardi suffered detriment in critical estimation from two causes—one arose from his not being in voice to execute clearly his music, and the other, from a serious mistake in the style of giving it, he seeming to prefer the heavy and heroic style, to Auber's intended light, graceful and brisk ideal for the martial yet love-sick Lorenzo, who should be—of course—very tender and sentimental in expression.

Signor Dubreuil is ever apt in performance of the brigand—Beppo—and never appeared more apt than on Friday evening.

The choral and orchestral parts went admirably, the new costumes were much and justly admired, the groupings and tableaux—except the last, which came off in very tame, flat and unsatisfactory fashion—were acceptably given and Maretzek had good reason to rejoice over his third opera night's results, both for general excellence of performance and the large, brilliant and enthusiastic public which braved a severe rain-storm to honor the artists and his essay in operatic management under serious difficulties.

FRENCH OPERA — THEATRE FRANCAISE.

The production of "Les Diamant de la Couronne" at Theatre Francaise was a decided success. The opera contains some of Auber's most charming inspirations. The music is light, sparkling and vivacious; the melodies fresh and spontaneous—a brilliant superstructure raised upon reminiscences of the quaint forms and sentiment of the old troubadour music, the spirit of which may be traced in the Madrigals which are yet retained in our vocal repertoire. With all the seeming frivolty of this music, a vein of tender and exquisite sentiment may be traced underlying the whole. The songs are full of character, and are varied from the simple chansom to the brilliantly ornate aria; the concerted music, without any pretension to largeness, is skillfully treated, so that the *ensemble* pieces are striking and effective through their rhythmic construction. The music of the second act is the most charming in the opera. The instrumentation is richly varied by subjects of singular grace and beauty, the color being laid in by a master hand. As a whole the music is eminently attractive, rich in beauties of a brilliant character, and as

fresh and as welcome as when it was 40 years younger.

The vocal artists are all excellent without being great. All the voices are small voices, but what there is of them is thoroughly agreeable. They are all well educated singers, and what they do is always in the best taste. Mlle. Naddie has a voice of large compass and rare flexibility; her execution, though sometimes faulty in the wide intervals, is generally brilliant and accurate, her manner is delightfully piquant, and as an actress she is entirely charming. The same may be said of Mlle. Laurentis, who sings with grace and expression, and whose execution is at once neat and brilliant. The duett singing of these ladies is marked by a rare union of purpose and is charming from its precision. M. Antheime is a thoroughly well-educated artist, and sings with unexceptionable taste, save that he uses his falsetto somewhat too freely, and with rare delicacy and expression. He is also an admirable actor, free, graceful and emphatic. The charm of these performances is that all the actors appear as human beings. They are totally free from stiltiness, they have the easy grace and manners of society, and they speak and act with natural fluency which gives a pleasant air of reality to the performance.

Though we cannot but desire the orchestra larger in numbers, we must express ourselves content with the accuracy and the delicacy of its performance. Mr. Predigam has got it well under his control; and produces all the possible effects from the numbers at his command. The overture was played with great spirit and delicacy, and the whole score was rendered with due attention to delicacy and breadth of coloring.

The costumes are rich and beautiful, the appointments in good taste and abundant, and all that relates to the stage department denotes the skill and attention of a competent stage manager. There are no discrepancies or rude contrasts to offend the eye, for the proprieties are carefully studied and rigidly enforced.

The immense repertoire at the command of the French Opera Troupe enables the management to offer constant variety in performance. This evening, for instance, three musical pieces will be performed, namely: "La Torreador," by Adolph Adam, "La Maitre de Chapelle," by Paer, and "Le Caid," by Ambrose Thomas. Thus, in the course of the season, the public will become acquainted with a large number of delightful musical works, which cannot be presented at any other establishment. The public is beginning to take an interest in the French Opera, and we are satisfied that the interest will increase rapidly, for all who visit it depart with a pleasant remembrance of an equal and charming performance.

Glinka's celebrated opera, "Life for the Czar," has succeeded well at Prague, in pure Bohemian dress.